



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine

As delivered by Deputy Political Counselor, David Kostelancik
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
December 16, 2004

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is a pleasure to welcome the OSCE's Project Coordinator in Ukraine, Ambassador Nicholas, to the Permanent Council.

We appreciate his presentation and the thorough written report, which he provided in early November.

The United States warmly welcomes the decision, which the Permanent Council just took this morning, to renew the Project Coordinator's mandate.

Ambassador Nicholas, we support your office's extensive and successful effort to establish a highly productive relationship with your host country.

It is clear that Ukrainian authorities place great confidence in you and your team.

The United States notes that the Project Coordinator's cooperation with the Ukrainian Government demonstrates that the relationship between OSCE field presences and host countries is a two-way street.

For OSCE field presences to be effective, not only must they earnestly engage their hosts, but host countries must reciprocate in good faith, as Ukraine has done.

The Project Coordinator's effort to coordinate and de-conflict his office's activities with other donors is a valuable service to both Ukraine and the international community.

As a result of this effort, the Project Coordinator has been able to launch a wide array of value-added projects in all three of the OSCE's dimensions that reflect the priorities of Ukraine.

Such projects include support for anti-human trafficking hotlines and the elaboration of economic empowerment strategies for high-risk groups; supporting the transition of former military personnel to civilian life through informational seminars on entitlements and retraining opportunities; assistance to the Ukrainian judicial system and legislature to resolve contradictions between the civil and commercial codes; and various economic capacity-building activities.

We are impressed by the Project Coordinator's range of activities, despite his office's limited staff.

The United States calls on participating States to join us and Ukraine in support of the Project Coordinator's 2005 budget proposal, including the employment of additional staff to manage new administrative demands imposed by the IRMA system.

In light of problems in the first two rounds of the Ukrainian presidential election, the United States commends the Project Coordinator's cooperation with Ukrainian Government and civil society partners in recent months to support non-partisan activities aimed at promoting transparent, fair and rule-of-law-based electoral processes.

Mr. Chairman, as this may be the last meeting of the Permanent Council until the New Year, we would like to make two further points on Ukraine related to ongoing developments.

In light of the December 11 press conference by doctors of the Rudolfinerhaus clinic, we call on the Ukrainian Government to fully, independently and transparently investigate reports that opposition candidate Victor Yushchenko was poisoned.

This incident must not develop into another unresolved case like that of murdered Ukrainian journalist Georgiy Gongadze, which continues to undermine the Ukrainian public's and international community's confidence in the rule-of-law in Ukraine.

The United States reiterates its call on all Ukrainian parties to spare no effort to ensure that the electoral process in conjunction with the balloting on December 26 meets OSCE commitments and international standards for democratic elections.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.